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PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS.

UNITED STATES.

INSECTS AS FACTORS IN THE CONVEYANCE OF DISEASE.

[Department Circular No. 71.]

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE SUPERVISING SURGEON-GENERAL,
MARINE HOSPITAL SERVICE,
Washington, D. C., June 20, 1901.

To the medical officers of the U. S. Marine-Hospital Service:

Your attention is directed to the importance of insects as factors in the conveyance of disease. There is no longer doubt as to the relation of the mosquito to the malarial diseases and to filariasis. According to Simond, plague is transmitted from the rat to man by the flea. The infection of typhoid fever, and to a certain extent cholera, may be conveyed from the excreta by flies. According to the recent work of the army commission the mosquito plays an important role in the transmission of yellow fever.

You are, therefore, directed to give particular attention to this subject so far as it relates to the work of the Service in quarantine and the prevention of the spread of communicable diseases. You are advised to carefully guard patients suffering with said diseases from the bites or annoyances of the insects above mentioned, and to this end to place mosquito netting over the sick bed. Excreta must be treated in a manner to prevent their becoming food or breeding places for insects. Hospitals where communicable diseases are treated should be thoroughly protected with fly screens at all windows, doors, and other openings, particular attention being paid to the kitchen, dining room, and protection of the food. Should mosquitoes, flies, or other insects gain entrance to the wards they should be at once destroyed.

The best method of killing insects in a large room is by sulphur fumigation. Formaldehyd can not be depended upon, for it frequently fails to kill insects. Pyrethrum powder when burned in an inclosure only stupefies mosquitoes and flies, and when used these insects must be subsequently collected and destroyed.

You are also directed to guard against the breeding of mosquitoes about marine-hospital reservations, quarantine stations, and camps by the methods now in vogue. Collections of water in buckets, barrels, cis-

terns, and the like are favorite places for the breeding of mosquitoes. Such collections should be carefully covered, or, if a cover is not practicable, petroleum should be poured on the surface and replenished from time to time. All collections of stagnant water, pools, ditches, and the like about the reservation should be drained, or, if impracticable, petroleum used as above. Approximately 1 ounce is sufficient in still water for 15 square feet of surface, and ordinarily the application need not be renewed for one month. Concerning the cultivation of certain plants and trees, and other means of exterminating mosquitoes, you are referred to the works of Giles and Howard, which have recently been furnished your station.

As far as ships are concerned, particular attention should be paid to the water tanks, casks, buckets, and other water collections, especially in regions where malaria and yellow fever prevail. In vessels coming from these regions measures as above indicated should be taken with a view to the destruction of possible mosquitoes or their larvæ.

WALTER WYMAN,
Supervising Surgeon-General U. S. M. H. S.

Approved:

O. L. SPAULDING,
Assistant Secretary.

[Reports to the Surgeon-General United States Marine-Hospital Service.]

Smallpox in Key West, Fla.

KEY WEST, FLA., June 5, 1901.

SIR: I have the honor to state that William K. (colored, age 23, born in Florida), an attendant in the port steward's office of the P. & O. Steamship Company, was discovered to be suffering with modified smallpox, this morning, by State Health Officer Porter.

This man has been isolated and the people in the house on Whitehead street, where he has been boarding, will be vaccinated.

There is no present and reasonable clue to the origin of the case.

Respectfully,

R. D. MURRAY,
Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

Smallpox in Indiana.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., June 8, 1901.

SIR: I have the honor to report as follows concerning smallpox in Indiana in May: The disease appeared in 19 counties at 60 different points. Dubois County, 10 cases, 1 death; Madison, 15 cases, 1 death; Lawrence, 12 cases, 1 death; Perry, 10 cases; Howard, 6 cases; Hancock, 4 cases; Clay, 20 cases; Vanderburg, 17 cases; Fulton, 2 cases; Knox, 7 cases; Union, 1 case; Dekalb, 18 cases; Dearborn, 4 cases; Lake, 50 cases; Jefferson, 5 cases; Floyd, 3 cases; Porter, 4 cases; Elkhart, 10 cases; Marion, 24 cases; Switzerland, 10 cases

Respectfully,

J. N. HURTY,
Secretary.